



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

### Fish and Wildlife Service

For Release: August 24, 1992

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#### U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE ANNOUNCES FINAL FRAMEWORKS FOR EARLY SEASON MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING AND PROPOSED FRAMEWORKS FOR REGULAR SEASON WATERFOWL HUNTING

The Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has issued final hunting frameworks for the early (opening before October 1) migratory bird seasons and has issued proposed frameworks to govern the regular fall waterfowl season.

The final early-season frameworks apply to the hunting of doves, woodcock, band-tailed pigeons, rails, snipe, common moorhens and purple gallinules, sandhill cranes, and sea ducks, as well as special September teal, wood duck, and Canada goose seasons. They also cover migratory bird hunting seasons in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

The frameworks prescribe season lengths, bag limits, shooting hours, and outside dates for the hunting of migratory waterfowl. States select their seasons from within the frameworks set by the Service. State regulations may be more restrictive, but not more liberal, than the Federal frameworks.

The final early-season frameworks include the reinstatement of September teal seasons after a 4-year suspension, continued Canada goose experimental seasons in Minnesota and Michigan, and initiation of 3-year experimental Canada goose seasons in Pennsylvania and New York. In addition, a season for the Rocky Mountain population of sandhill cranes will be initiated in Montana.

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The Services original proposal was to close the season for Pacific Coast population of band-tailed pigeons; however, based on the public comments received and other information, band-tailed pigeon hunting will continue, but with a shortened, 9-day fall season rather than the 16-day season of last year. The affected states -- California, Washington, Oregon, and Nevada -- will be required to report harvest and hunter-participation information to the Service. All other frameworks were finalized without change.

Proposed frameworks for the regular hunting season include a duck and coot season of not more than 30 days between October 1, 1992 and January 20, 1993, for all flyways. Generally, proposed shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset daily, and possession limits are twice the daily bag limits. Proposed bag limits are specified by species and flyway. Hunters should check state hunting regulations for specific local information on permits, bag limits, and open areas. Highlights of the proposed regular season frameworks by flyway are as follows:

#### **ATLANTIC FLYWAY**

(Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia)

Ducks and Coots -- A daily bag limit of three, including no more than one hen mallard, two wood ducks, two redheads, one black duck, one mottled duck, one pintail, and one fulvous whistling duck. Seasons on canvasbacks and harlequin ducks are closed. The daily bag limit of mergansers is five, only one of which may be a hooded merganser. The daily bag limit of coots is 15.

Geese -- For light geese (lesser snow geese, blue geese, greater snow geese, and Ross' geese), states may select a 107-day season between October 1, 1992, and February 10, 1993, with five geese per day. For Canada geese, various restrictions have been proposed to reduce harvest of the Atlantic population. For example, the season in North Carolina has been suspended, while other seasons have been shortened.

Atlantic Brant -- States may select a 50-day season between October 1, 1992, and January 20, 1993, with a limit of two brant per day.

### MISSISSIPPI FLYWAY

(Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee)

Ducks and Coots -- The daily bag limit is three and may include no more than two mallards (no more than one of which may be a hen), one black duck, one pintail, two wood ducks and one redhead. A point system is offered as an alternative. The canvasback season is closed. A daily bag limit of five mergansers may be taken, only one of which may be a hooded merganser. The daily bag limit of coots is 15.

Geese -- The following are the major changes from last year's regulations. The daily bag limit has been reduced from three to two. Various restrictions have been placed on season lengths, bag limits, and/or harvest quotas for Mississippi Valley population Canada goose areas. The season in nine northeastern counties of Illinois is extended for nine additional days. The season in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Zone and Olmstead County, Minnesota, is extended for an additional 10 days and a new zone has been created in northwestern Arkansas with a 14-day experimental season.

### CENTRAL FLYWAY

(Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and portions of Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Wyoming)

Ducks and Coots -- The daily bag limit is three, including no more than two mallards (no more than one of which may be a hen), one mottled duck, one pintail, one redhead, and two wood ducks. A point system is offered as an alternative. The canvasback season is closed. A daily bag limit of five mergansers may be taken, only one of which may be a hooded merganser. The daily bag limit of coots is 15.

Geese -- Seasons may be split into two segments. Framework dates are the Saturday nearest October 1 (October 3, 1992) through January 31, 1993, for dark geese (Canada and white-fronted geese and black brant) and the Saturday nearest October 1 through the Sunday nearest February 15 (February 14, 1993) for light geese (lesser snow and blue, greater snow and Ross' geese). This rule applies to all states in the Central flyway except New Mexico, where the closing date is February 28 for light geese. Bag limits vary by state.

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## PACIFIC FLYWAY

(Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and portions of Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Wyoming)

Ducks and Coots -- The daily bag limit for ducks and mergansers is four, including no more than three mallards (no more than one of which may be a hen), one pintail, and either two canvasbacks, two redheads, or one of each. The daily bag limit for coots and common moorhens is 25, either singly or in the aggregate. Some states may split their seasons.

Geese -- In most cases, a 93-day season may be selected with outside dates between the Saturday nearest October 1 (October 3, 1992) through the Sunday nearest January 20, 1993 (January 17, 1993). The basic daily bag and possession limits are six geese, including no more than three light geese and three dark geese. Special regulations apply in California, Washington, and Oregon. There will be no open season on Aleutian Canada geese in the flyway and no open season on cackling geese in California, Washington, and Oregon.

These proposed regulations for late season waterfowl hunting will be printed in the Federal Register and will be open for public comment for a 10-day period beginning on or about August 21. Written comments should be sent to: Director (FWS/MBMO), USFWS/DOI, Room 634, Arlington Square, Washington, D.C. 20240.